

FOREWORD

In mid-January, 1945, Hon. Maury Maverick, Chairman and General Manager of the Smaller War Plants Corporation, requested my services in the preparation of a history of the Smaller War Plants Corporation for submission to the Bureau of the Budget as a permanent record of the work of the Corporation.

Mr. Coronado W. Fowler was assigned to me. His experience and knowledge of the affairs of the Smaller War Plants Corporation proved most valuable. From December 1, 1941 to October 1, 1942, he served as Executive Secretary of the Senate Committee on Small Business and had an active hand in the development of the legislation which created the Corporation. In October, 1942, he was appointed Special Assistant to Mr. Lou Holland, Deputy Chairman of the War Production Board heading the Smaller War Plants Division and serving also as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Smaller War Plants Corporation. When General Robert Wood

Johnson succeeded Mr. Holland in January, 1943 and became Vice Chairman of the War Production Board and Chairman of the Board of Directors of SWPC, Mr. Fowler was made Executive Secretary of the Corporation. When Hon. Maury Maverick succeeded General Johnson in February, 1944, Mr. Fowler was retained as Special Assistant to the Chairman so he was familiar with the history of the legislation creating the Corporation as well as the activities of the Corporation from its inception.

Some of the other wartime Government Agencies brought in a staff of professional historians to prepare their histories. No such provision was made by the Smaller War Plants Corporation. The history of SWPC was a cooperative affair. The burden of research and preparation of the original draft of the history of each unit of the Corporation fell upon the heads of the

respective Offices, Bureaus, and Divisions.

We worked out, in successive drafts, a master outline for the history of the Smaller War Plants Corporation, following a topical organization. This work was done in consultation with Dr. Luther Gulick, A. B. Wacker, Dr. John Blair, and others. Mr. Fowler and myself drew up a general set of suggestions and directions to guide in the preparation of the histories of the various branches. We met with the members of the Offices, Bureaus and Divisions of the Corporation and discussed the general nature of the historical project and held frequent informal consultations with those to whom the research and writing were assigned. As the material came in, it was read by Mr. Fowler and myself, revised and edited. Occasionally, contributions were returned for further elaboration and documentation. In all such cases, our requests were

complied with courteously and efficiently.

To Mr. Fowler, himself, fell the burden of writing the largest single block of the history - that which covers the legislative and administrative history of the Smaller War Plants Corporation and the history of the administrative structure of the Corporation. He also contributed introductions and supplements to the material submitted by the various branches.

There are two main divisions of this history of the Smaller War Plants Corporation; (1) a topical history of the organization and work of the central Washington organization of the Corporation; and (2) a collection of brief histories of the Regions and Districts in the field organization. The latter were prepared in the Regional and District offices.

Documentary Exhibits are appended to each separate section of the topical history of the Washington

organization and to the history of the several Regional and District Offices. A complete set of the Bi-Monthly Reports of the Corporation are included to provide further documentary material illustrating the evolution of the Corporation in all phases of its work.

It is my duty and pleasure to acknowledge the enthusiastic and effective teamwork of the executives of the Corporation who were required to assume the additional burden of preparing material for this history, in addition to their regular duties. Only efficient cooperation could have made the completion of the history possible.

The names of the contributors are indicated in all cases where the material has been prepared expressly for the historical project. A few of the studies included are those which represent adaptations and revisions of material originally issued for other purposes

but deemed worthy of inclusion in the historical project.

Special acknowledgment is due Mr. Fowler. His extensive knowledge of all phases of the Corporation's activities and his ability to tell the story lucidly were invaluable.

We are likewise deeply indebted to Mrs. Irene Thornton who, as secretary to Mr. Fowler, had been with the Corporation almost since its inception. She located much of the source material and collected many of the documents. Her skill and accuracy as an amanuensis and her ability to handle deftly many tedious details were indispensable in the completion of this historical project.

Harry Elmer Barnes